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FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9108
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHNK/AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT PRIORITY 0026
RUEHJI/AMCONSUL JEDDAH PRIORITY 9726
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0001

C O N F I D E N T I A L RIYADH 001343

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO NEA/ARP FOR BMASILKO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/31/2018
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [MR](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: SAUDIS TO REMAIN SILENT ON MAURITANIA COUP

REF: A. SECSTATE 91116
[1](#)B. RIYADH 1232

Classified By: Charge' d'Affaires David Rundell
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

(C) On August 31, PolOffs delivered reftel demarche to Ambassador Talal al-Malki, who oversees Arab League issues with the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Al-Malki stated that the SAG agrees with the U.S. position that the coup is unacceptable, but that the Saudis would not make a public announcement to this effect. He added that the Saudi government's public silence should be taken as an expression of disapproval, and that the Mauritanian coup leaders would understand this. He emphasized that "this is the Saudi way."

Following this logic, al-Malki advised that we should not expect the SAG to make a public statement in support of the August 19 UN Security Council Presidential Statement condemning the overthrow of the Mauritanian president. On the other hand, al-Malki listened attentively when the Poloffs advised that the U.S. was taking steps to cut off most assistance to Mauritania, although he could not say whether the Saudis would follow suit.

RUNDELL